

## **6. Build on and support key strategies from current collaborations for early childhood and early grade literacy to inform policy**

**Vision: Every student on track for success by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade**

**National Drop-Out Prevention Category: Early Childhood/Early Literacy**

### **Background:**

Many national organizations and initiatives are focusing in on the need for early childhood success to reduce drop-out rates, increase graduation rates, and ensure postsecondary and workforce readiness. One such organization is the National Governor's Association, which states

Challenges ranging from implementing the Common Core State Standards to ensuring the nation's workforce is competitive in the global market are raising the demands and the stakes for student success. Yet too many students, particularly those from low-income and minority families, fall short of these heightened expectations. Most at-risk children are behind even before they enter kindergarten and fall further behind in the early elementary grades. To effectively prepare students for college or career training, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers increasingly recognize that all children need a clear progression of high-quality learning experiences starting early in life. A growing body of research shows that mastery of foundational cognitive and social-emotional skills from B-3rd grade is particularly important for students' long-term academic success.

Most states, however, have not begun to intentionally develop a coherent learning pathway that begins in early childhood and achieves a strong foundation through 3rd grade. Because of the fragmented nature of state administration and policy leadership for early care and education (ECE) programs and K-3 education, states have inconsistent requirements about: what young children should know and be able to do; the necessary knowledge, skills, and supports that early childhood and early elementary educators need; and how to measure learning and success.

Governors can play a unique and important role in developing a coordinated plan to promote clear learning expectations and effective supports from B-3rd grade and put more students on the path to success. To lay the groundwork for greater coordination, many governors in recent years have supported efforts to align state early learning guidelines with K-3 academic standards, including the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and English Language Arts. State leaders that have already aligned their B-3rd grade learning standards now need support in implementing these standards by both increasing the effectiveness of early childhood and early elementary educators and developing the means to measure progress and success.

In Arizona, Build Arizona's Early Grade Success Workgroup (discussed in detail below) has extensively reviewed the national, and Arizona, landscapes. From a larger context, this workgroup's guiding document states

The first eight years of life are a time of explosive growth and development that lays the foundation for the skills needed for long-term success. Early relationships have a critical impact on the development of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. These relationships happen first in the family, then in the broader context of neighborhood, early childhood programs, and community. Strong families are the building blocks of a strong society and it is crucial that parents have the tools they need to support children with stable, nurturing environments in their

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earliest years. Families who have knowledge about early childhood development and the skills to advocate for their children's needs are significantly more likely to be involved in their children's school and support their school success.<sup>1</sup>

In the early years of school children need to have educational programs that are both academically rigorous and also attend to the unique developmental needs of children in kindergarten through third grade. But to succeed in an academically rigorous environment with high expectations, children need to be prepared for success from the start. Critical early language, reading and math skills, which are necessary for a strong academic foundation and success in school, are developed during the years before school even starts. A study of language development showed that low-income children heard 30 million fewer words than their higher income peers by the time they turned three; this gap accounted for fully 60% of the children's achievement by third grade.<sup>2</sup> Children who are prepared when they enter kindergarten consistently perform at higher proficiency levels in third grade.<sup>3</sup>

But this does not mean only academic skills are needed. Research increasingly shows that non-cognitive skills – such as motivation, the ability to work with others, attention, self-regulation, self-esteem, health and mental health – are just as important as cognitive skills and are profoundly impacted by early experience in the first five years of life.<sup>4</sup> These skills are also among the most desired by employers – and they are developed in the early years.

The economic return on investment of early childhood investments are impressive, yielding up to \$17 for every \$1 invested;<sup>5</sup> the Minneapolis Federal Reserve calculated an internal rate of return of 16% for high quality of early childhood programs.<sup>6</sup>

### Arizona Context:

Several key organizations in Arizona have early childhood context:

- Arizona Ready – supporting statewide reforms, including early childhood within continuum of supports necessary for educational success pre-school through workforce;
- Development of First Things First—accomplishments in expanding access to early childhood supports in many areas, creating some synergy among departments, demonstrating public will.
- BUILD AZ working on developing broad stakeholder support for development of birth to 8 system and developing additional public/private partnerships to support it;
- READ ON AZ implementing a statewide plan to create a solid continuum of supports to enhance early literacy;
- ADE (with statewide stakeholders) recently completed work to align early learning standards, infant toddler standards and Head Start standards with Arizona Common Core Standards – to be

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<sup>1</sup> El Nokali, N. E., Bachman, H. J. & Votruba-Drzal, E. (2010). Parent Involvement and Children's Academic and Social Development in Elementary School. Available: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2973328/>

<sup>2</sup> Hart, B. & Risley, R. (2003). *The early catastrophe: The 30 million word gap by age 3*. Available: <http://www.aft.org/newspubs/periodicals/ae/spring2003/hart.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> Human Capital Research Collaborative (2011). *Assessing the Validity of Minnesota School Readiness Indicators*.

<sup>4</sup> Presenting the Heckman Equation. Available: <http://www.heckmanequation.org/content/resource/presenting-heckman-equation>

<sup>5</sup>  
<sup>6</sup> Grunwald, R. & Rolnick, A. (2003). Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return. Available: [http://www.minneapolisfed.org/publications\\_papers/pub\\_display.cfm?id=3832](http://www.minneapolisfed.org/publications_papers/pub_display.cfm?id=3832)

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approved by State Board of Education in May 2013. Training on standards is incorporated into all public ADE preschool programs and is also incorporated into the Quality First (Quality Improvement and Rating System) that has been implemented by FTF.

Of particular note, Build Arizona is statewide partnership made up of business leaders, state agencies, and early childhood practitioners addressing early childhood systems, influencing policy and informing practice. Build Arizona includes several additional initiatives to support healthy children and families in Arizona such as an Early Grade Success workgroup. This group has generated an Arizona specific foundation of Early Childhood activity in Arizona:

Arizona stands at a unique time in its history as it charts a bold new course demanding accountability, outcomes and results from its education system. Two critical reforms will significantly strengthen the state's education system and make graduates more career ready and competitive for the 21st century workforce.

- In 2010 Arizona adopted the national common core standards. Arizona's Common Core Standards (ACCS), rigorous standards that will increase expectations on students, teachers and communities at every grade level, will be fully implemented in 2013-2014.<sup>7</sup>
- Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the Move on When Reading policy requires schools to retain 3rd grade students who attain a "falls far below" designation on the 3rd grade state reading assessment. (Good cause exemptions will be accepted in some circumstances).<sup>8</sup>

Leaders from business, education, and communities applaud these reforms. Yet a deeper look at current achievement indicates that Arizona could quickly amass significant costs if it does not take strategic steps and make common sense investments in ensuring early grade success. Many of Arizona's young children face significant challenges to school success, including poverty (23%), difficulty speaking and understanding English (47.6%), and lack of exposure to books and other literacy resources.<sup>9</sup> Fully 25% of third graders in Arizona do not meet the proficiency standards<sup>10</sup> and, when the new Move On When Reading law is implemented the costs of grade retention (approximately \$7,848/per student<sup>11</sup>) and remediation could quickly escalate. While reading is key, data indicates that students are also struggling in math and science. In 2012, a full 31% of third graders in Arizona did not meet proficiency standards in math and 37% of fourth graders did not meet proficiency standards in science. (Arizona Department of Education, 2012 AIMS Results.)

...Successful investments in other states show that for a fraction of the cost of retention or remediation, early investment can significantly improve the achievement and success of Arizona's students, setting them on the path for school and lifelong success.

...States with more college graduates and strong education systems will be better poised to win the innovation and jobs race. Arizona has both strengths and challenges as it seeks to increase its competitiveness and be highly attractive to businesses and well-qualified employees considering jobs in the state:

...Strengths:

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<sup>8</sup> Move on When Reading Home Page: Arizona Department of Education.

Available: <http://www.azed.gov/k12-literacy/move-on-when-reading-home-page/>

<sup>9</sup> Read on Arizona Strategic Literacy Action Plan (2013-2013). Available:

<sup>10</sup> Arizona Indicators. Available: <http://arizonaindicators.org/education/aims>

<sup>11</sup>

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- Through the adoption of Arizona's Common Core State Standards Arizona is poised to prepare students to be college and career ready for the 21st Century. A new assessment is under development to align with the Common Core to monitor student progress.
- Our state has one of the best career and technical education systems and is home to one of the best community college systems in the country.
- Arizona has created a successful school choice environment through open enrollment and the development of hundreds of charter schools and strong home school laws and resources.
- Through the development and implementation of the A-F School Accountability Letter Grade System, parents are now able to make informed choices about schools for their children and schools and communities are actively working to improve their grades.
- Arizona is also working on teacher and principal evaluations and performance pay systems to ensure accountability.
- Over 40% of Arizona's population is Hispanic, African American, American Indian or other ethnicities. In a time when speaking more than one language is a tremendous asset, over 27% of Arizona's households speak a language other than English at home.<sup>12</sup>

Challenges:

- In Education Week's annual Quality Counts report (2013) that ranks states on a number of education indicators, Arizona ranked 43rd. While the state received a C- grade overall, certain indicators, including school finance and building and supporting teaching capacity received lower grades (D- and D+ respectively).
- In 2011 the percentage of 8th grade students who performed at or above the NAEP Proficient level was 28 percent for reading, 31% in math and 23% for science.
- 24.6% of students in Arizona students do not graduate from high school.<sup>13</sup>
- 60% of high school graduates who enroll in Arizona's higher education institutions remedial courses.<sup>14</sup>
- The difference in lifetime earnings between high school dropouts and high school graduates is \$327,000; over a lifetime college graduates earn an average of \$1 million dollars more than high school graduates and those with graduate degree earn up to \$1.3 million more those with undergraduate degrees, depending on their area/degree.<sup>15</sup> This disparity has a direct impact on both the quality of the Arizona workforce as well as the taxes paid in the state that can support incentives to businesses moving to Arizona, law enforcement, border security, a quality education system and other core state investments.

...What is Needed for Early Grade Success and How is Arizona Doing?

The Committee for Economic Development, comprised of the nation's foremost business leaders, identified four broad policies that, in addition to strong support from families, are critical for children to be prepared for early grade success:<sup>16</sup>

Committee for Economic Development – Broad Policies Children Need to Succeed	
Element	Arizona Status

<sup>12</sup> United States Census Bureau. State and County Quick Facts: Arizona profile. Available: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04000.html>

<sup>13</sup> Arizona Indicators Project: High school graduation rates (2010). Available: <http://arizonaindicators.org/education/high-school-graduation-rates?hchart=348>

<sup>14</sup> Arizona Department of Education: State of Education Address 2013. <http://www.azed.gov/blog/2013/02/13/2013-state-of-ed/>

<sup>15</sup> Carnevale, A. P., Rose, S. J., & Cheah, B. (2011). *The college payoff: Education, occupation, lifetime earnings*. Georgetown Public Policy Institute: Center on Education and the Workforce. Available: <http://cew.georgetown.edu/collegepayoff/>

<sup>16</sup> Committee for Economic Development (2012). *Unfinished business: Continued investment in child care and early education is to business and America's Future*. Available: <http://www.ced.org/images/content/issues/earlyeducation/UnfinishedBusinessLO.pdf>

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High quality early learning opportunities for infants and toddlers	In Arizona, 59.7% of children ages 0-3 live in families where all adults are in the workforce and need some form of child care. Currently in Arizona, less than 10% of programs have national accreditation and approximately 20% of early learning programs are enrolled in Quality First, Arizona's Quality Rating and Improvement System; a national study indicated that 40% of care for infants and toddlers was of poor quality. <sup>17</sup>
Access to Pre-Kindergarten Programs	Arizona currently ranks 49th in the percentage of children ages 3-4 that are attending preschool. <sup>18</sup> According U.S. Census Bureau, there are 447,964 children 0-5 in Arizona, <sup>19</sup> approximately 179,000 of whom are between the ages of 3-5 years of age; an estimated 34% of Arizona's three and four year olds attend preschool, compared to the national average of 47.9%. <sup>20</sup> In fiscal year 2010 Arizona eliminated funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant, which provided some funding for the state's public preK program. <sup>21</sup> To ensure preK was not completely eliminated, First Things First (FTF) provided a grant to the Arizona Department of Education in 2011 to provide preK programs to 1,900 children. <sup>22</sup> (NEED CONF.)
High Quality Full-day Kindergarten	High quality kindergarten has been proven to improve children's academic and social skills, literacy and language development and achievement in the form of both improved test scores and better grades in elementary grades. Further, children who attend full day kindergarten have been shown to have improved school attendance rates and reduced levels of remediation and retention. <sup>23</sup> Arizona does not currently fund full-day kindergarten statewide. However, tuition or local funds can be accessed if local districts want to offer full day kindergarten Still, for some families full day, high quality kindergarten is not accessible or affordable.
High Quality Elementary Instruction	Arizona has developed an Early Childhood Education, Birth Through Age 8 or Through Grade 3 Endorsement. The endorsement is required for all teachers serving children birth through Kindergarten in a public school. The endorsement is not currently required for first through third grade teachers. There is also interest and efforts geared toward extending the school year/school day to offer more learning time, particularly at low-performing schools.

National Governor's Association – Broad Elements Systems Need to Succeed	
Element	Arizona Status
Accountability	Arizona has implemented numerous data-driven accountability measures. These strategies include: teacher performance pay based on student achievement, A-F school ratings, Move on When Reading legislation, Quality First to enhance the quality of early learning programs, and the First Things First school readiness indicators.
Coordinated Leadership	There are opportunities to increase coordination and improve efficiency in the birth to grade 3 system in Arizona. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While K-12 investments are housed in and overseen by the</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cory: where did this number come from?

<sup>19</sup> United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey: State Fact Finder Demographic Profile for Arizona. Available: [http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11\\_1YR/DP05/0400000US04](http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_1YR/DP05/0400000US04)

<sup>20</sup> (Ed Week – Quality Counts – check stat-KidsCount is different.)

<sup>21</sup> National Institute for Early Education Research (2012). Arizona State Profile. Available: <http://www.nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/Arizona.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> National Institute for Early Education Research (2012). Arizona State Profile. Available: <http://www.nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/Arizona.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> WestEd (2005). Expanding Learning Opportunities: Full Day Kindergarten. Available: [http://www.wested.org/online\\_pubs/po-05-01.pdf](http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/po-05-01.pdf)

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	<p>Arizona Board and Department of Education, early childhood investments are spread across Department of Health (child care licensing), Department of Economic Security (child care subsidies, early intervention for infants and toddlers), First Things First (family support, early learning quality improvements) and the Department of Education (early intervention for preschoolers, early learning standards/guidelines).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are multiple federal and state funding streams for different programs for young children, nearly all of which are federally funded. Note: Arizona is heavily dependent on federal funds for its early childhood programs, investing only \$XX in state funding beyond its mandated requirements and the citizen-approved First Things First funding. Only a fraction of eligible children are served with the state and federal early childhood investments.</li> </ul>
Alignment of Early Childhood through Early Grade Learning Standards	<p>States are required to have early childhood and K-12 learning standards. Arizona has Early Learning Standards (for children 3-5 years old) and Infant Toddler Guidelines (for children 0-3).<sup>24</sup></p> <p>Early childhood programs that receive funding through First Things First or for early childhood special education must take training on the standards and use them to inform lesson planning. The 0-3 and 3-5 standards/guidelines are currently being revised to align to the Common Core for K-12.<sup>25</sup></p>
Child Assessments and Screenings	<p>To measure progress in early childhood and early grades and ensure children are receiving the individualized care and instruction needed, reliable, valid assessments are needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Arizona, providers across the health, early child care and education arenas utilize various screening instruments to identify early developmental and health delays. At this time, there is not a consistent, statewide tool being utilized across settings. Nor is there a coordinated system for tracking screening outcomes and referrals across providers.</li> <li>Arizona does not currently have a statewide kindergarten entry assessment. Stakeholders are exploring best practices and opportunities for developing a kindergarten entry assessment for Arizona that would be used in the early months of school and used to inform individualized instruction.</li> <li>For grades 3-12, Arizona has started using the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments aligned to the Common Core standards for children, which will replace the current AIMS assessment in the 2014-2015 school year.</li> </ul>
Teacher/ Leader Preparation and Professional Development	<p>Arizona got a D- in building capacity for teachers.<sup>26</sup></p> <p>There are a number of teacher/leader preparation programs in Arizona, many of which have produced positive outcomes; each initiative is limited in both geography and number of participants.</p>
Resource Allocation and Reallocation	<p>Specific recommendations for allocating investments to high quality early care and education investments are outlined below.</p>

<sup>24</sup> Arizona Early Learning Standards available at: <http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/EarlyLearningStandards.pdf>

Arizona Infant Toddler Guidelines available at:

<http://www.aztf.gov/Documents/Arizona%20Infant%20and%20Toddler%20Developmental%20Guidelines%20DRAFT%20for%20VETTING.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Arizona Common Core information available at: <http://www.azed.gov/azcommoncore/>

<sup>26</sup> Quality Counts report



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The Professional Development Systems Building Work Group (PDSBWG), a collaborative group currently being facilitated by First Things First and positioned under the BUILD Arizona coalition, recently released a two-year strategic plan outlining specific strategies for moving toward the development of a professional development system for early childhood and early educators (birth to age 8). The plan identifies three critical areas to be addressed: 1) Articulation and Credentials; 2) Workforce Competency Framework development; and 3) Workforce Registry and Website Development. The plan also identifies some key policy issues that will support overall implementation and sustainability of the system.

**Available Actions:**

- 1) Formalized recognition of need for development, implementation and sustainability of a professional development system that supports early childhood educators and early elementary educators and ensures connections/continuity between 0-5 and K-3 transitions.
- 2) To formalize and build capacity of early educators—need a viable mechanism to provide oversight for early childhood professional development as well as dedicated and aligned resources to support continued improvement of early childhood educator training, certification and professionalism of field.
- 3) Solid connection to K-3 system will support increased continuity between 0-5 and K-3, improved readiness for school, and enhanced learning through developmentally appropriate practice that continues into the early elementary years.
- 4) Increase standards and accountability of pre-school through grade three investments.
  - Support the successful implementation of the Arizona Common Core Standards (adopted in 2010) to include the development of a solid technological infrastructure to measure progress, adequate curriculum and learning resources, and comprehensive support for educator and administrator professional development/capacity building at all levels (birth through K-12).
  - Ensure adequate and relevant data capacity for early childhood through grade 12: A critical part of implementing Arizona's education system is an adequate data system that enables sharing of key child indicators, promoting professional development and overall program results tracking for future investment decisions and sustainability. Currently this information is spread across multiple data systems, making methodical analysis and data-based decision making impossible. There are efforts underway to dramatically improve the state's data system for K-12; this system should also capture key, relevant early childhood data so Arizona can benefit from data on the full early childhood through K-12 education pipeline and ensure all investments are having the desired impact. A first step is identifying the key data that are relevant, adequate, and can be gathered/used in ways that honor strict FERPA privacy requirements.
  - Ensure alignment of standards, assessment and curriculum/quality between early childhood and K-12 to support student success with Arizona Common Core Standards: Work with partners to support the implementation of recently aligned infant/toddler, early learning and Kindergarten standards through awareness, outreach and investment in early learning quality improvement strategies.
  - Develop and adopt a common intake process for Head Start, Quality First Scholarships, public preschool, other programs to ensure children access the program that will best meet their needs and state funds are invested in a strategic and targeted way to best meet children's needs.
  - Support development and implementation of valid, reliable, ongoing assessments to support individualized instruction: Leverage additional resources/influence to support development of Arizona Kindergarten Developmental Instrument. After the KDI is piloted in 2014-2015, refine as needed and then expand usage statewide so Arizona has consistent data on kindergarten readiness that is aligned to the statewide assessment and Arizona Common Core Standards. This data can be used to both inform kindergarten instruction and to more effectively target interventions to

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vulnerable populations prior to kindergarten entry. (KDI – DISCUSS WITH GROUP)

- 5) Support coordinated, high quality literacy supports through the statewide Read On Arizona Initiative to ensure children are reading at grade level at the end of every year.
  - Expand targeted, outcomes-based early childhood literacy investments: Support continued investment in K-3 reading intervention as related to the third grade reading and retention policy. Work with READ ON AZ to leverage public and private funding to increase access to and quality of literacy support services in communities throughout the state.
  - Provide opportunities to extend learning time including extended school year and extended school day options: Successfully implemented by smaller districts in Arizona, an extended school year calendar (up to 200 days), has been identified as a strategy that holds particular promise for increasing literacy and achievement, particularly among low-income and dual language learner students. To make the model work, schools that extend the school year would need an increase in base level funding from 5 to 8%. In addition to the extended school year model, states across the country are also implementing extended learning time models by extending the school day to include research-based academic activities. These models should be carefully reviewed (by whom?), adapted to meet Arizona's needs, and offered in targeted, high-need districts.
- 6) Ensure high quality kindergarten is universally available.
  - Determine current capacity of kindergarten in Arizona and document and share what works: There have been important changes to kindergarten in Arizona in recent years. Districts around Arizona are implementing a variety of models of kindergarten and many are getting exceptional results. Funding, curriculum and implementation models that work in Arizona must be documented and shared widely.
- 7) Ensure families have access to tools to support their children with stable, nurturing environments in their earliest years. Parents are their children's first and most important parents. All parents, regardless of income, background or experience benefit from information on child development, behavior, nutrition, literacy and other topics related to raising healthy children who are prepared for success.
  - Expand access to home visitation programs (need details)
  - Expand access to resources and support on family literacy (need details)
- 8) Ensure high quality, voluntary, pre-Kindergarten programs are available to all 3 and 4 year olds. Providing voluntary access to high quality preschool programs Arizona can improve how prepared children are when they arrive in kindergarten and increase school achievement.
  - Develop expansion strategy for pre-Kindergarten programs: This expansion strategy would include detailed information on current capacity, prioritized enrollment, costs and standards to ensure Arizona had a feasible, cost effective and efficient strategy with broad stakeholder agreement for pre-Kindergarten expansion.
- 9) Expand access to quality early learning opportunities for young children and families.
  - Keep working parents in the workforce: There are currently over 7,000 children on the waiting list for child care subsidies. Through CCDF funds, Arizona covers a portion of the cost of child care for eligible families through a voucher program established by the legislature under welfare reform. Assistance is provided to three categories of families: 1) CPS and foster care related, 2) parents involved in Welfare to Work activities, and 3) Low income working families struggling to support their children and stay off welfare. By increasing access to child care subsidies more families can work toward self-sufficiency, remain in the workforce, and not rely on public assistance.



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Additionally, Arizona has not increased its market rate since 2000, putting programs that serve children who receive child care subsidies at a financial disadvantage and compromising the quality of early childhood programs available to the state's most vulnerable children. The market rate should be increased to reflect the 2012 market rate.

- Increase the number of programs in Quality First: Quality First, Arizona's quality rating improvement system (QRIS) helps families that would like to use early learning services to select programs that are of high quality, improves the quality of early learning programs through targeted investments, and promotes accountability. Currently approximately 20% of program across the state are enrolled in Quality First serving just over 40,000 children. Development of an expansion strategy for Quality First can significantly impact the availability of high quality early learning programs for children throughout the state.
- Develop linkages and integration of oversight to support scaffolding of a broad-based quality improvement and access strategy. A growing number of states are developing or implementing legislation or projects that link child care subsidies, child care licensing and the quality rating and improvement systems together as a means of improving access to quality for all children in early learning programs. These strategies may include opportunities for providers to participate in a process to prepare them to enter into the quality rating system. In some instances, child care subsidy reimbursement rates are tied to these initial quality improvement steps and/or ratings.

10) Currently, there is no formal advisory or governance structure that oversees professional development for early childhood. While the State Board of Education/Department of Education provides oversight/manages K-12 certification and early childhood endorsements, and the Department of Health Services within their Child Care Rules and Regulations identify staff qualifications for early childhood center personnel as well as small group home providers, there is no policy-making body that provides leadership and policy making authority for early childhood professional development.

11) Currently, funding for the early childhood/early grade educator professional development system is separated among various agencies/administrative homes that house a variety of programs and funding streams that support specific programmatic professional development. The PDSWG plan identified the need to identify and develop opportunities to blend, braid and/or leverage these funding sources to support the coordination, infrastructure and sustainability of the professional development system that is being created.

#### Other Considerations:

In addition to this work, the State Literacy Plan indicates opportunities for coordinated policy on professional development around literacy and language development in early childhood and the early grades. Individual districts have just been required to submit individual plans and this process may provide opportunities for further policy development around effective educator support and development.

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